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## SECRET PHOTOS

### The Cooperation between Associated Press and the National Socialist Regime, 1942–1945

›I have a confession to make, Chief, but please don't get a shock.‹ Thus begins a 40-page report of considerable significance for the transnational history of National Socialism, written by Willy Brandt to Louis P. Lochner in 1946. The Brandt in question is not the later German chancellor, but Willy Erwin Hermann Brandt, managing director of Associated Press GmbH<sup>1</sup> until the end of 1941. The report is addressed to his former superior Lochner, chief correspondent of Associated Press (AP) in Germany, and describes the cooperation between AP and the Nazi regime in the years 1942–1945. The previously unknown report<sup>2</sup> discovered among Lochner's papers in Madison/Wisconsin is written on poor quality carbon paper and has all the hallmarks of a secret agent thriller. It describes how, from 1942 until the spring of 1945, the American wire service regularly exchanged photographs with the ›Bureau Laux‹, a secret agency of

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- 1 AP GmbH with headquarters in Berlin was the AP's photo agency in the German Reich. It was subject to the National Socialist *Schriftleitergesetz* (Editors' Law), and from the mid-1930s onwards only employed Germans with an *Ariernachweis* (Aryan certificate). The only exception was its nominal director Louis P. Lochner, an American citizen and head of AP's news agency in Berlin with German and American employees. The AP news agency was not subject to the Nazi Editors' Law.
  - 2 Louis Paul Lochner Papers, The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Box 2, Folder 14 (Willy Brandt). These papers contain the 40-page report in English to Lochner with the pencilled note ›1946‹; in the following: Brandt report. Citation here: p. 1. It is not clear who translated the report from German into English back then. The AP report quotes from a version translated into English in 2001 by the Frankfurt AP head Steve Miller. The German original seems to have been lost. A copy is now available at <<https://www.ap.org/about/history/ap-in-germany-1933-1945/ap-in-germany-documents.pdf>>; in the following: AP documents.

the SS and the German Foreign Office in Berlin. A courier flew to Lisbon and back each day transporting photos from and for Germany's wartime enemy, the USA, via diplomatic pouch. The transactions were initially conducted at the AP bureau under Luiz Lupi in Lisbon, and from 1944, when the exchange via Lisbon took too long, also at the AP bureau in Stockholm under Eddie Shanke. Here, as a cover, the Swedish agency ›Pressens Bild‹ was involved as an intermediary.<sup>3</sup> An estimated 40,000 photos were exchanged between the enemies in this way while the battles of World War II were waged and the Holocaust was taking place.<sup>4</sup>

In Berlin, the photographs from the Americans were initially reserved for the top ranks of the Nazi regime. Hitler received them each day from foreign minister Ribbentrop via special envoy Walther Hewel. According to Brandt, copies of the AP photos also went to Himmler, Göring, Goebbels and four leadership positions within the Wehrmacht.<sup>5</sup> The previous state of research, according to which the American press did not return to Germany until 1944/45 with the expeditionary forces and there had been no ties during the war years in terms of staff or material, is already in need of revision.<sup>6</sup> In statements to the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and *taz* newspapers, which reported on my findings, AP admitted its cooperation with the Bureau Laux and said that the US administration had approved the daily exchange of photos with Nazi Germany in July 1942.<sup>7</sup> Coinciding with a *Washington Post* article on 10 May 2017,<sup>8</sup> the agency published an ›official AP history‹ entitled ›Covering Tyranny. The AP and Nazi Germany 1933–1945‹. This 163-page report is on the one hand commendable, because it makes public important documents from the AP archive that were not previously available to researchers; AP also had pertinent files from the National Archives declassified as additional sources. But the AP report is at the same time an official company history and a politics of the past pursued by AP in the interests of the company, not least through numerous questionable moral judgements. Critical interpretations and above all the post-1945 history, AP's continued employment of people from the Bureau Laux

3 The papers of Eddie Shanke at Marquette University, Raynor Memorial Libraries, have also recently been made accessible: Edwin A. Shanke Papers, 1932–1993. Call number: B-5.4 Series 2-EAS.

4 Helmut Laux, who was not, however, involved in the daily exchange at a practical level, estimated the figure at 10,000 photos. Memorandum for the Officer in Charge, Subject: Operation POUCH, 14 January 1946. National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). RG 319, Records of the Army Staff. IRR, LAUX, Helmut, File X8502334, Box 456. Quoted in AP report (fn. 9), p. 98. The figures given in the Brandt report suggest more like 40,000 photos from each side.

5 See the distribution list for the AP photos within the Nazi leadership, p. 22.

6 Martina Schumacher, *Ausländische Nachrichtenagenturen in Deutschland vor und nach 1945*, Cologne 1998, pp. 80–82.

7 Willi Winkler, Bildertausch per Kurier, in: *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 24 February 2017, p. 31; Klaus Hillenbrand, Deal mit dem Feind, in: *tageszeitung*, 4/5 March 2017, p. 33.

8 Michael S. Rosenwald, The secret deal the Associated Press made with the Nazis during WWII, 10 May 2017, <[https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/retropolis/wp/2017/05/10/the-secret-deal-the-associated-press-made-with-the-nazis-during-wwii/?utm\\_term=.3884681b22bc](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/retropolis/wp/2017/05/10/the-secret-deal-the-associated-press-made-with-the-nazis-during-wwii/?utm_term=.3884681b22bc)>; in the print edition on 11 May 2017 under the title ›A WWII secret: AP had photo deal with the Nazis‹, in: *Washington Post*, p. A2.

and the SS, are largely ignored. The report cannot replace research into the picture exchange by independent historians. It does, however, indicate a number of interesting new leads for further research:<sup>9</sup>

– Approval of the photo exchange was granted by the ›Office of Censorship‹ under the direction of Byron Price, who reported directly to President Roosevelt. Price had been appointed to the top position of this new authority ten days after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour. As ›Executive Editor‹, he had previously been one of AP's most important staff members.

– An extensive investigation was conducted by the Counter Intelligence Corps (CIC) in 1945 in the American-occupied zone of Germany, named ›Operation Pouch‹ after the Nazi diplomatic pouches used to transport the material from and for AP to Lisbon and Stockholm. Helmut Laux was arrested and repeatedly interrogated. Documents concerning the cooperation between the Bureau Laux and AP during the war were seized from his house. The CIC report on the investigation came to the conclusion that AP was guilty of trading with the enemy. The investigating agents knew nothing, however, of the – secret – White House approval of the photo exchange with the Nazi regime, and the file was closed without any further consequences in 1946.

– Lochner not only knew about the deal between AP and the Bureau Laux; he himself had arranged it in personal negotiations with Laux. As early as 1940, Lochner had drawn up scenarios suggesting how AP could stay in the news and photo business with Nazi Germany in the event that the US entered the war. Lochner even used the channel of communication between AP and the Bureau Laux from 1942 to correspond with his German mother-in-law, who lived in Berlin; this was why, in 1946, the CIC agents called for criminal proceedings to be brought against him personally as well. Lochner's private correspondence via the AP connection suggests the possibility that not only photos, but also state and semi-official documents may have been exchanged and even clandestine negotiations conducted in this way. This sets some important goals for further historical research into what was presumably the only connection that was active on a daily basis between the enemies USA and Germany in the years 1942–1945.

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9 <<https://www.ap.org/about/history/ap-in-germany-1933-1945/ap-in-germany-report.pdf>>; in the following: AP report. This report, last accessed on 10 June 2017, still contains numerous errors, and in the ›second part‹ in particular, on the exchange with the Bureau Laux, many endnotes are still missing (marked with ›x‹) or incorrect. The document section unfortunately contains only excerpts from the files, never the complete archive.



Helmut Laux (on the far right) with Joachim von Ribbentrop and Pierre Laval in Munich, 9/10 November 1942  
(bpk/Bavarian State Library/Heinrich Hoffmann)

## 1. A Phantom Takes Shape: The Bureau Laux in the German Foreign Office

In spring 2016, Harriet Scharnberg's article published in this journal created quite a stir in the press and research community. The author showed that photos from German AP photographers who were members of the SS, such as Franz Roth, found their way into the American and international press via the AP headquarters in New York. This continued until the United States entered the war in December 1941.<sup>10</sup> Conversely, AP photos were printed in the German press and even used in special publications to fuel anti-American and anti-Semitic sentiment. But it is not particularly surprising that such a brisk trade took place before the USA entered the war. The media system

<sup>10</sup> Harriet Scharnberg, The A and P of Propaganda. Associated Press and Nazi Photojournalism, in: *Zeithistorische Forschungen/Studies in Contemporary History* 13 (2016). The article was first published in German and then translated into English (for the journal website).



had already been internationalised for decades, and numerous agreements were in place, which, as in the case of the cooperation between Havas, Reuters, WTB and AP, resembled international media trusts that dominated the global news flows.

What was not known, however, was that this exchange continued covertly from 1942 until the end of the war. Likewise undiscovered by historical research was the organisational unit behind the photo exchange on the German side, the Bureau Laux, and its director, SS-Obersturmführer Helmut Laux.<sup>11</sup> As foreign minister Ribbentrop's personal photographer, Laux was often part of Hitler's entourage and was present at important state receptions.<sup>12</sup> The key figure in the photo exchange and Laux's superior was SS-Obersturmbannführer Dr. Paul Karl Schmidt, one of the most successful ministerial careerists of the ›Third Reich‹. In October 1940, at the age of just 29, he attained the rank of ›Gesandter 1. Klasse‹ (Minister First Class) in the Foreign Office, where he directed the press and news division.<sup>13</sup> The foreign correspondents in Nazi Germany remembered him as the abrasively sarcastic speaker at international press conferences.<sup>14</sup>

The historian Peter Longerich spent several hours interviewing Schmidt/Carell for his doctoral thesis on the ›propagandists‹ of the Foreign Office. In view of the then still unknown daily photo exchange between Nazi Germany and the USA and the existence of the Bureau Laux, it is evident that the young *éminence grise* of the Foreign Office mainly lent his interpretations to already established facts in this interview.<sup>15</sup> Yet from 1983, if not earlier, there was already a public clue to the secret of the photo exchange.

11 The OI Preliminary Interrogation Report of the American security officers with the prisoner of war Helmut Otto Laux of 20 November 1945 is revealing. Here Laux said that he was born in Donau-eschingen on 19 June 1916. Laux failed to disclose his SS membership and claimed to have worked as a freelance photographer for Ullstein until his arrest. He said that he had only worked for the Foreign Office and Ribbentrop because it had allowed him to travel abroad. WWII Nuernberg Interrogation Records, OCCPAC Interrogation Transcripts and Related Records, Laux, Helmut Otto, 1945–1947, <<https://www.fold3.com/image/232038002>>. In the following: Laux Interrogation 1945.

12 According to information provided to the author by the Federal Foreign Office Political Archive on 20 and 27 February 2017, there is no AA (Federal Foreign Office) personal file on Helmut Laux, nor are there any references, for instance in the telephone directories for 1943, to a Bureau Laux. There is no entry in the Ludwigsburg register for Laux either. Many thanks to PD Dr. Martin Cüppers (Ludwigsburg Research Centre, University of Stuttgart) for drawing my attention to this. The Berlin-Lichterfelde Federal Archives (BAL), however, contain the following two files on Laux: the SS Führer Personal File (R 9361 III/539709) and a *Reichskulturkammer* (Reich Chamber of Culture) dossier (R 9361 V/26756). These indicate his promotion from SS-Untersturmführer to SS-Obersturmführer in 1943 and his numerous trips abroad on behalf of the Foreign Office. There may also be papers from the photo studio that Laux ran after 1945 in Frankfurt. See Braunes Zeltlager, in: *Spiegel*, 12 April 1947, p. 6; Schenk mir ein Pferdchen, in: *Spiegel*, 29 September 1949, pp. 7–10, here p. 9. The image database <<http://www.bpk-images.de>> contains numerous photos of state receptions hosted or attended by Hitler and Ribbentrop with Laux in the background.

13 Wigbert Benz, *Paul Carell. Ribbentrops Pressechef Paul Karl Schmidt vor und nach 1945*, Berlin 2005, pp. 15–17.

14 For instance Louis P. Lochner in *What about Germany*, New York 1942, pp. 309–312, 317, 337; William Shirer, *Berlin Diary. The Journal of a Foreign Correspondent 1934–1941*, New York 1942, pp. 251, 311, 536.

15 Peter Longerich, *Propagandisten im Krieg. Die Presseabteilung des Auswärtigen Amtes unter Ribbentrop*, Munich 1987. On criticism of Longerich's interviews with Schmidt/Carell, see Benz, *Paul Carell* (fn. 13), p. 27, and Christian Plöger, *Von Ribbentrop zu Springer. Zu Leben und Wirken von Paul Karl Schmidt alias Paul Carell*, Marburg 2009, p. 27.

The volume *Die Gleichschaltung der Bilder. Pressefotografie 1930–1936*, edited by the photo historians and art educators Diethart Kerbs, Walter Uka and Brigitte Walz-Richter, includes an interview with Arthur von Brietzke, the former head darkroom technician of AP GmbH in Germany. After a few pages on the history of press photography technology, right at the end Brietzke chats about his activity in the ›Third Reich‹. Every big Nazi had his own personal photographer, he said – Hitler had his Heinrich Hoffmann, Göring his Eitel Lange, ›and so foreign minister Ribbentrop had the photographer Helmut Laux. He took me in, and so I then worked in the press department at the Federal Foreign Office.‹<sup>16</sup> As I shall demonstrate, this is far from an accurate account of staff recruitment procedures at the Bureau Laux. But a much more important statement followed in the interview: ›Later there was a connection via Sweden, through which we received American AP photos throughout the entire war until 1945. If I remember correctly, Mr. W. Brandt, who was the last manager of AP's picture department until October '41 [correct: until December 1941] and then also worked in the ›Bureau Laux‹, was involved in arranging this picture exchange via Sweden. This way we also received pictures of the advance of the Allies, which were of course immediately forwarded to the German [government] offices. I still have a picture with the stamp on the back saying ›Bureau Laux‹ showing US soldiers on the streets of the shot up and captured city of Cologne. This one reached us via Stockholm at the beginning of 1945.‹<sup>17</sup>



American troops capture Cologne in early March 1945. This photo by an AP war correspondent reached the Nazi leadership in Berlin via the AP bureau in Stockholm. Under the terms of the agreement with AP it became a Bureau Laux photo and could be used in the territory under Nazi rule. (AP/Bureau Laux; printed in Diethart Kerbs/Walter Uka/Brigitte Walz-Richter [eds], *Die Gleichschaltung der Bilder. Pressefotografie 1930–1936*, Berlin 1983, p. 30)

<sup>16</sup> Diethart Kerbs/Walter Uka/Brigitte Walz-Richter (eds), *Die Gleichschaltung der Bilder. Pressefotografie 1930–1936*, Berlin 1983, p. 30.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 31. Harriet Scharnberg disregarded this remark.

Nevertheless, no historian has yet inquired into what the ›Bureau Laux‹ agency in the Foreign Office press department was and what kind of photo exchange via Sweden it organised with the biggest news agency of Germany's enemy, the USA. The Bureau Laux does not appear in any study or any organisation chart. Now, through Brandt's report to Lochner from 1946, Brietzke's casual remarks in the volume from 1983, initial research in American and German newspaper archives, in the AP Images database, in the Berlin-Lichterfelde Federal Archives and through the AP report, at least the shadowy outlines of Helmut Laux, his secret bureau and some of his staff can be discerned.<sup>18</sup>

According to the Brandt report, Laux was an ambitious young man who had arrived in Berlin fresh from the Hitler Youth movement in Baden.<sup>19</sup> There he had won the confidence of Schmidt, who eventually ›gave‹ him to Ribbentrop as personal photographer. According to Brandt, however, Laux also functioned as Schmidt's liaison officer to the SS<sup>20</sup> and was his confidant and spy, passing on the gossip from the beds of important Nazis. He claims that Laux's lover Hela Strehl, a former mistress of Goebbels, assisted him in this.<sup>21</sup> Brandt also says that Laux was involved in the looting of art from occupied territories right across Europe.<sup>22</sup> Schmidt is to have used the Bureau Laux with its AP photos for a previously unknown Foreign Office information service. The aim, said Brandt, was to enable the top Wehrmacht generals to act more ›politically‹ and more independently of the decisions of ›Corporal Hitler‹. It quickly became clear,

18 At <<http://www.apimages.com>>, the keyword ›Ribbentrop‹, for example, turns up numerous photos from the years 1942–1945 that can only have ended up in the possession of AP through the exchange with the Bureau Laux via Lisbon and Stockholm or as a result of the return of the AP GmbH photo archive (expanded to include photos from the Bureau Laux) by Brandt after 1945.

19 Elsewhere Brandt also notes that Laux had been a member of the Reich leadership of the Hitler Youth and had accommodated fellow members in his office. Brandt report (fn. 2), pp. 7, 21–22. Concerning Laux's biography there are also some brief details from Laux himself in: Laux Interrogation 1945 (fn. 11).

20 The nature of the Bureau Laux as a ›joint venture‹ of the SS and Foreign Office is also underscored by the fact that Schmidt latterly held the rank of SS-Obersturmbannführer and that SS-Gruppenführer Jüttner is named by Brandt as being a friend of foreign minister Ribbentrop, who in turn held the rank of SS-Obergruppenführer. Jüttner is also included in the distribution list for the AP photos. Brandt report (fn. 2), p. 7. See also below, p. 22.

21 Helmut Laux (›the Foreign Office photographer‹) and Hela Strehl (›Director of the German fashion school [Deutsches Mode-Institut/German Fashion Institute] in Berlin‹) also contributed material to the camouflaged Nazi journal TELE, which was published in Sweden. Wiltrud Ziegler, *Die Phantom-Zeitschrift TELE. Ein Beitrag zur Publizistik der letzten Jahre des Dritten Reiches*, doctoral thesis, Mainz 1989, p. 267. On Hel(g)a Strehl as Goebbels' mistress, see Peter Gathmann/Martina Paul, *Narziss Goebbels. Eine psychohistorische Biografie*, Vienna 2009, pp. 160, 184.

22 Brandt report (fn. 2), pp. 7, 18. After 1945, the Czechoslovakian authorities attempted to retrieve three 17th-century paintings that were believed to be in the possession of Laux. They were classified as ›looted art‹ from individuals persecuted on political and/or racial grounds. Laux was thought to have received them from the Foreign Office. The document gives the address of Bureau Laux at Innsbrucker Straße 44 in Berlin-Schöneberg. OMCUS. Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives. Cultural Property Claim Applications. C44 C6/25-27 III/C-1022/30 1945–1951, <<https://www.fold3.com/image/292437862>>.



however, that the military leaders preferred the AP photo material to the instructions of Ribbentrop and Schmidt.<sup>23</sup> The top-ranking Nazis thus had fresh photo material from the AP correspondents right through until the very last days of the war.

In 1945/46, the Bureau Laux attracted the attention of the American occupation forces in Berlin. This was prompted by Willy Brandt's restlessness. He wanted to get back to work, preferably reopening AP GmbH as a ›news and picture agency‹ immediately – at his private home in Berlin-Kreuzberg, Zimmerstraße 15. Brandt lost no time contacting the AP war correspondents who had just arrived in Berlin. He identified himself as a former AP employee, having carefully saved his AP press card after 1942. When his old boss Lochner turned up in Berlin in 1945,<sup>24</sup> Brandt had a pleasant surprise for him: he had saved the AP GmbH photo archive through the ›turmoil of the war‹, in order to return it to the owners in New York after the fall of National Socialism.<sup>25</sup> Lochner was much more delighted, however, that Brandt and the former AP employees Rudolf (Rudi) Josten and Erich Oettinger had also preserved much of the Berlin AP bureau's technical equipment worth several thousand dollars, including a teleprinter that was urgently needed in the Paris AP office in 1945/46.<sup>26</sup> Just how Brandt, Josten, Oettinger and other German AP men had accomplished these wondrous feats after the official closure of the AP bureau – Lochner and his American staff had been detained on 10 December 1941 – appears, for the time being, to have been of little interest. But Lochner did not place all his cards on the table either, choosing to remain silent about the fact that he had already discussed the salvaged property of AP GmbH with Laux in Wiesbaden and Memmingen.<sup>27</sup>

Brandt applied for denazification and a press license, with generous letters of support from Lochner (›Willy Brandt was an absolutely dependable anti-Nazi who had managed to save a lot of our property from confiscation and who deserved reinstatement‹<sup>28</sup>). This forthright manner made the responsible American officers suspicious. Brandt's career in the photo agency of AP in Germany, which from 1935 was subject to the Editor's Law, was itself cause for astonishment.<sup>29</sup> Unlike the AP wire service in Berlin, which supplied news from Germany via New York for the American market, the AP GmbH sold not only its own photographs from Germany, but also global AP photo material to German buyers. Brandt owed his rapid rise within AP GmbH to

23 Brandt report (fn. 2), pp. 7-8.

24 Ibid., p. 41.

25 Brietzke said in 1983 that ›a large part‹ of the AP GmbH photo archive had been destroyed in the 1950s/1960s because no one had any use for it any more. Kerbs/Uka/Walz-Richter, *Pressefotografie* (fn. 16), p. 31. On the unexplained disappearance of the AP GmbH photo archive after 1945, see also the AP report (fn. 9), p. 135.

26 Lochner to Cooper, 12 June 1945, in: Louis Paul Lochner Papers, The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Box 1, Folder 23.

27 Memorandum Report, Subject: Archives of Associated Press: Mr. Helmut Laux, 24 September 1945, NARA, RG 319, IRR, LAUX, Helmut, File X8502334, Box 456. Quoted in AP report (fn. 9), p. 97.

28 Louis Paul Lochner Papers, The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Box 2, Folder 14.

29 On AP and the Editors' Law of 1935, see Scharnberg, *The A and P of Propaganda* (fn. 10), Ch. 4.



the forced departure of the last Jewish AP staff members in Berlin. Lochner had resorted to various tricks in an attempt to keep them on after 1933, but was ultimately unsuccessful.<sup>30</sup>

According to his statements to the American security officers in Berlin in 1945/46, Brandt kept the business going as the manager of AP GmbH even after the detention of Lochner and the American colleagues on 10 December 1941, and held the German staff together – the men, in particular, feared being conscripted to the front. Various parties interested in AP GmbH and its extensive photo archive promptly appeared on the scene, a veritable ›run on our concern‹, as Brandt put it.<sup>31</sup> Goebbels' Ministry of Propaganda, the Foreign Office under Ribbentrop, Himmler's SS, Hitler's personal photographer Hoffmann and others all wanted to take over the AP staff and the valuable AP equipment. Brandt said that the SS agent was the German AP photographer Franz Roth,<sup>32</sup> who was able to ›lure‹ the AP employees Gerhard Meixner and Arthur Meyer over to the SS.<sup>33</sup> The Bureau Laux still employed AP photographer Gerd Baatz, who had known Laux previously from photo shoots with leading Nazi figures, and the above-mentioned AP head darkroom technician Arthur von Brietzke, who developed and printed the photos in the lab.<sup>34</sup>

In the battle for the German AP, the Foreign Office in alliance with the SS prevailed over its ›despised rival‹,<sup>35</sup> the Ministry of Propaganda, by invoking its responsibility for foreign property. It also succeeded in having a custodian appointed to administer the AP GmbH, a certain ›Herr von Levinsky‹.<sup>36</sup> But Brandt remained the key figure. According to AP manager Kent Cooper, AP New York had handed AP GmbH over to Brandt as ›office manager‹, in response to pressure from German authorities, a few days before the outbreak of World War II.<sup>37</sup> It is interesting to note that the AP GmbH had been founded and registered as a photo and news agency. It was not until 1950, under Brandt as sales manager, that it began to expand to become AP's largest subsidiary worldwide, supplying both text and images, but the aspiration was already apparent in the 1930s.<sup>38</sup>

30 Lochner to Cooper, 24 April and 22 October 1933, in: Louis Paul Lochner Papers, The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Box 1, Folder 23.

31 Brandt report (fn. 2), pp. 2-3.

32 On Roth, cf. Scharnberg, *The A and P of Propaganda* (fn. 10), pp. 18-21 (German version: pp. 28-30).

33 Brandt says that the offer of employment at Atlantic GmbH had not been able to prevent their conscription, which was why Meixner and Meyer, like Roth, had joined the SS. ›Franz Roth was sitting pretty with the SS, for which he was making lively propaganda among the former co-workers in order to open an SS picture service.‹ ›Meixner and Arthur Meyer [...] finally joined the SS.‹ Brandt report (fn. 2), pp. 3-4, 6-7.

34 Brandt report (fn. 2), pp. 9, 12-13. Franz Roth (fallen in 1943), Gerhard Meixner and Arthur Meyer also appear to have worked for the Bureau Laux.

35 *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

36 Probably Karl von Lewinski: <[http://www.bundesarchiv.de/aktenreichskanzlei/1919-1933/0000/adr/adrl/kap1\\_5/para2\\_115.html](http://www.bundesarchiv.de/aktenreichskanzlei/1919-1933/0000/adr/adrl/kap1_5/para2_115.html)>.

37 Minutes of the AP Board of Directors, 6 October 1939, Associated Press Annual Report for the Fiscal Year of 1939, 41. AP01.01 Records of the AP Board of Directors, APCA. Quoted in AP report (fn. 9), p. 69.

38 AP report (fn. 9), pp. 46-47.

The Bureau Laux was able to pursue its full range of activities from the spring/summer of 1942. It provided photographers who documented all important events involving Ribbentrop and even travelled abroad to produce pictures for the Foreign Office. These were mainly supplied to the German press through the Deutscher Verlag publishing house. The Bureau Laux also supplied foreign newspapers with pictures and provided the press attachés at the German embassies with photos that made Ribbentrop and Schmidt look important. A selection was made from these and other photos from the Foreign Office press department of the most interesting material for the daily exchange with AP.<sup>39</sup> Selective investigations have looked at the quantity and quality of these Nazi photographs and the importance they acquired in the American and international press, which received the material via the AP headquarters in New York. This needs to be analysed in a dedicated research project covering the phenomenon in its entire breadth (for the years 1942 to 1945) and depth (all of AP's American and international buyers in these years), as does the use of AP photos via Bureau Laux in the Nazi-controlled or -influenced press in Germany and Europe.

The Bureau Laux's incorporation of the AP GmbH and its photo archive was cemented with the help of both the Foreign Office and the SS against the wishes of the Ministry of Propaganda when the most influential figures like Brandt, Baatz and Brietzke joined the Waffen SS (armed SS), while continuing to work in the Bureau Laux as civilian employees. Only Laux himself is said to have always worn his SS uniform.<sup>40</sup> This SS and Foreign Office 'joint venture' seems to have been financed by both sides as well.<sup>41</sup> And the bureau was not located in offices belonging to the Foreign Office, but initially in Laux's luxurious 7-room apartment on Innsbrucker Straße 44 in Berlin-Schöneberg.<sup>42</sup> According to Brandt, prisoners from the Sachsenhausen concentration

39 18 January 1946, US Headquarters Berlin District, Office of Military Government (Berlin), Information Services Control Section, APO 755, US Army Vetting of Willy Erwin Hermann Brandt, for Commanding Officer ISCS, in: Louis Paul Lochner Papers, The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Box 2, Folder 14 (Willy Brandt). In the following: Vetting 1.

40 'Baatz and Brietzke were enlisted by the armed SS and were immediately transferred to the Press and Information units [of the Foreign Office].' Another member of staff at the Bureau Laux is named as 'Borchert sen.'. This is probably the father of the German AP photographer Eric Borchert, who died in the war at the end of 1941. The former German AP employees worked for the Bureau Laux 'just as though times hadn't changed'. Brietzke also received the customary SS blood group tattoo at a military exercise. If detected, Brandt wrote in 1945/46, this could now cause him great difficulties. He said that Brietzke feared being arrested as an SS man at any moment. Brandt report (fn. 2), pp. 6, 9-10. Brietzke's SS registration card (*Stammkarte*) has been preserved; it identifies him as 'photographer' and lists him as 'SS radio operator'. His SS classification card (*Verwendungskarte*), signed 6 January 1942, states: 'Uk [Unabkömmlich]-Stellung aufgehoben[,] da von Fa. The Associated Press GmbH für Freiwilligenmeld. für SS freigegeben.' ('Reserved occupation suspended[,] as cleared by Co. The Associated Press GmbH to volunteer for SS.') Arthur von Brietzke, personal SS and SA documents, BAL, R 9361 III/260976. Brandt's SS registration card (*Stammkarte*) contains only his date of birth, 26 October 1910. He must have joined the Waffen SS very quickly at the beginning of January 1942. Willi [sic] Brandt, personal SS and SA documents, BAL, R 9361 III/258953.

41 They had been 'on the budget of the armed SS', and 'Laux was financially backed by the Foreign Office and the armed SS'. Brandt report (fn. 2), pp. 8-9.

42 Ibid., p. 27.

camp were also employed there. »A fine arrangement for all concerned«, as he said.<sup>43</sup> Certainly for the former German AP employees, who received a high civilian salary of 18,000 reichsmarks in addition to the SS pay. They were in a reserved occupation, were able to live with their families and avoided service at the front.<sup>44</sup> Their membership of the Waffen SS meant that Schmidt and Laux were their disciplinary superiors; with their dual affiliation they embodied the compromise between the Foreign Office and SS, which was also reflected in the distribution list for the AP photos within the Nazi leadership.<sup>45</sup>

Brandt's self-pityingly apologetic report from 1946 must be read with a critical distrust of the text as a reliable source, particularly regarding those points which concern the author himself. Brandt wanted to win Lochner over as an influential advocate for his rapid denazification and reemployment with AP Germany. He played down any aspects that could incriminate him. Brandt cast himself as the sole lamb among wolves, forced to join the Waffen SS (to avoid service at the front) and the Bureau Laux (to save the AP archive), but always protecting AP's interests and longing for the collapse of National Socialism. He even cleverly threw in a few threats of making AP's photo exchange with the Nazi regime public: »Perhaps it will be possible for me to add a chapter to the story of the AP which was published a few years ago.<sup>46</sup> But I have no such ambitions because my ambitions were appeased by the fact that the Archive was rescued.«<sup>47</sup>

In reality, there is no evidence of Brandt having shown any opposition or resistance to the Nazi regime. On the contrary, he was no doubt grateful for the protection of Laux and Schmidt, which saved him from service at the front and enabled him to live a very comfortable life in Berlin. Brandt did not want to perish »in the masses of Hitler's cannon fodder, and was well aware that »my transfer to the armed SS perhaps saved my life.«<sup>48</sup> But everyday life in Berlin was also relatively comfortable. Until the very last weeks of the Nazi regime, members of the Bureau Laux, which in the final stages had moved to an air-raid shelter for children in Dahlem,<sup>49</sup> ate, drank and enjoyed themselves with other privileged individuals in the foreign press club. This had been relocated to the Ribbentrop villa in Dahlem after the building in the Fasanenstraße was bombed. Champagne and cognac flowed freely here until the fall of Nazi Germany.<sup>50</sup>

43 Ibid., p. 8.

44 See Vetting 1 (fn. 39) and: 24 January 1946, US Headquarters Berlin District, Office of Military Government (Berlin), Information Control Service, Intelligence Section, APO 742, GKS/vrd, IC 383 (Int), Subject: »Circumstances Surrounding the Investigation of Willy Brandt«. To: Director, Information Control Service, Attn: Major Peeples. Signed: Intelligence Section, ICS, OMGUS, in: Louis Paul Lochner Papers, The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Box 2, Folder 14 (Willy Brandt). In the following: Vetting 2.

45 See p. 22.

46 A reference to Oliver Gramling, *AP. The Story of News*, New York 1940.

47 Brandt report (fn. 2), p. 2.

48 Ibid., pp. 5, 17.

49 Laux is said to have moved to a nearby house which he had renovated by prisoners from the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. Ibid., p. 27.

50 Ibid., pp. 27-28. On the foreign press club, see Longerich, *Propagandisten* (fn. 15), pp. 286-290.

As far as its value as a source on the cooperation between AP and the Bureau Laux is concerned, the Brandt report is a compelling contemporary document. In particular, the time frame of 1945/46 (Brandt was unemployed at the time and had not yet returned to work for AP) and the individuals involved (Lochner was his former boss, so Brandt didn't have to hide any AP company secrets from him) suggest that the report is of high historical value. The transcripts of the two interrogations by US security officers in Berlin, preserved in the Brandt file from Lochner's estate, serve as critical cross-checks to Brandt's ego document. Their tried-and-tested professional scepticism in the face of the daily downplaying, distortions, omissions and lies in denazification applications in post-war Berlin was immune to both Brandt's attempts to exculpate himself and Lochner's letters of defence. The American security officers neatly summed up the situation: ›The picture agency Laux of the German Foreign Office was a completely nazified organization. It did not perform the functions of a normal picture agency but specialized on political events. The head of this organization was a high SS officer.‹<sup>51</sup>

It is interesting to note that Lochner veritably showered Brandt with care packages. By the end of 1946 he had spent 200 dollars on care packages for him alone. Lochner supported many old friends from Germany, but not at this level of intensity.<sup>52</sup> Later, too, the two remained close. ›My dear Brandt‹, Lochner wrote in February 1949, ›I can understand how bitter you must feel that you are not permitted to resume your former work at A.P., while Laux, Dr. Fischer, etc. go unpunished. The whole denazification business is a colossal injustice.‹<sup>53</sup> In the mid-1950s, Lochner noted: ›The AP, during my connection with it, has never been known for standing by someone under fire if it feared that such loyalty might reflect adversely upon the news association.‹<sup>54</sup> My appeals [to AP for Brandt] reached deaf ears. Later, when a calmer atmosphere prevailed and apparently nobody could be found as able as Willy Brandt to conduct our picture operations in Germany, and when, fortunately, his sister, of whose whereabouts he did not know at the time I pleaded for him, had a photostat of the draft into the Waffen-SS, which was accepted as proof, he was reinstated and is head of our AP pictures operations even now, 11 years after my resignation.‹<sup>55</sup> Brandt died in 2001.<sup>56</sup> Josten, who had been involved in the covert discussions about the photo exchange between the Foreign

51 Vetting 2 (fn. 44).

52 Lochner to Brandt, 27 December 1946, in: Louis Paul Lochner Papers, The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Box 1, Folder 23.

53 Lochner to Brandt, 20 February 1949, in: *ibid.* Probably Ministerialrat Erich Fischer (who did not hold a doctorate) from the Ministry of Propaganda, after 1945 *Spiegel* employee. Fischer's name is also on the distribution list for the AP photos within the Nazi leadership (see p. 22).

54 Lochner's 1942 book *What about Germany?* carries the following dedication: ›To Kent Cooper, General Manager of the Associated Press, for whom I remained in Germany to the end, this book is appreciatively dedicated.‹

55 Letter with the date ›1946‹ and the initials ›LPL‹ in: Louis Paul Lochner Papers, The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Box 2, Folder 14 (Willy Brandt). Brandt was reinstated as sales manager in 1950. AP report (fn. 9), p. 129.

56 AP report (fn. 9), p. 7.



Office and AP in 1942<sup>57</sup> and presented himself, along with Brandt and Oettinger, as one of the rescuers of the AP equipment in 1945, also continued his career with AP after 1945. He was latterly head of its German operations and died, respected by all, only in 2007. *Editor & Publisher* devoted an emotional obituary to him.<sup>58</sup>

After 1945, many foreign correspondents even forgot about their resentment towards Dr. Paul Karl Schmidt. Like other important Nazis, he had become an interesting source for lucrative book projects. In a letter to Lochner in 1947, Helge Knudsen, Danish foreign correspondent in Berlin, wrote of »[o]ur old acquaintances [Otto] Dietrich and Paul Schmidt« being in Nuremberg and no doubt having plenty to tell about Hitler – Lochner was no longer working for AP and was looking to establish himself on the book market.<sup>59</sup>

Laux's activity after 1945 is still largely a mystery. Unlike Brandt, he did at least spend considerable time in prisoner-of-war camps, but he does not seem to have been banned from exercising his profession as a photographer. He even received denazification clearance sooner than Brandt.<sup>60</sup> At any rate, Laux was soon able to reactivate his contacts abroad. He contributed glossy photos of various leading Nazis from D-Day 1944 to the 14 June 1948 edition of *Life*, signing quite innocently as »Photographer Helmut Laux of the *Berliner Illustrierte*«. There was no mention of the fact that he had taken the pictures in Hitler's headquarters as Ribbentrop's personal photographer, SS-Obersturmführer and director of a secret Foreign Office bureau.<sup>61</sup>

57 Brandt report (fn. 2), p. 5.

58 Rudi Josten, Former Head of AP's German-Language Service, Dies, in: *Editor & Publisher*, 4 January 2007. From 1942 to 1945 Josten worked for the news service Transocean, which operated under the control of the RMVP (*Reichsministerium für Volksaufklärung und Propaganda*, the Reich Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, or Ministry of Propaganda), and intercepted English short-wave broadcasters. See »Antrag auf Abhörgenehmigung ausländischer Rundfunksender für Rudolf E. Josten, Schriftleiter, geboren am 2.02.1907 in Berlin« (Request for authorisation to intercept foreign radio stations for Rudolf E. Josten, editor, born in Berlin on 2 February 1907). Transocean GmbH to RMVP (Ministry of Propaganda), 11 May 1942. Rudolf Josten, Reich Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, BAL, R 55/23789. But Josten maintained a connection to Brandt and the Bureau Laux.

59 Knudsen (Berlingske Tidende) to Lochner, 19 April 1947, in: Louis Paul Lochner Papers, The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Box 5, Folder 44 (Helge Knudsen). On Knudsen's work in the »Third Reich«: Palle Roslyng-Jensen, War Observed at a Distance. Media Coverage and Attitudes to War in Denmark 1939–1940, in: Gunner Lind (ed.), *Civilians at War. From the Fifteenth Century to the Present*, Copenhagen 2014, pp. 145–184.

60 Lochner to Brandt, 20 February 1949, in: Louis Paul Lochner Papers, The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Box 1, Folder 23. Cf. also Laux Interrogation 1945 (fn. 11). At his interrogation, the prisoner of war Laux is promised in November 1945 that »in the interest of Associated Press« he would be given the opportunity to talk with AP representatives and then be »cleared for release«. However, Laux was arrested on 7 January 1946 for having failed to disclose his membership of the Waffen SS. According to an article in the *Spiegel*, he was still in a prisoner-of-war camp in 1947. See fn. 12.

61 Speaking of Pictures. These show how D-Day disrupted Hitler's HQ four years ago, in: *Life*, 14 June 1948, pp. 12–14. Thanks to Dr. Mona Garloff (University of Stuttgart) for drawing my attention to the edition of *Life*. In the years 1942–1945, the *Berliner Illustrierte* was full of photos used with anti-American and anti-Semitic intent, most of which probably came from the AP/Bureau Laux photo exchange.

## 2. »The AP Connection«:

### The Photo Exchange between Associated Press and the Bureau Laux in the Years 1942–1945

»Lisbon«, Goebbels dictated for his diary on 20 September 1941, »has become an international news hub that could scarcely be more complicated.«<sup>62</sup> A few months later, when the USA entered the war, the situation at the major intelligence hubs of World War II – Lisbon, Stockholm, Bern and Istanbul – became even more bewildering.<sup>63</sup> The Bureau Laux, too, chose Lisbon, and, from 1944 onwards, also Stockholm, as the transfer hub for its photo trade with AP.

Laux seized the opportunity that arose in the spring of 1942 to accompany a mission to Lisbon as photographer. The occasion was the exchange of the American journalists and diplomats who had been detained in Bad Nauheim since the end of 1941, including the AP men Lochner and Shanke, for the German diplomats and journalists detained in the USA.<sup>64</sup> »Give me a letter of recommendation to Mr. Lochner and to the representative of the AP in Lisbon«, Laux said to Brandt (as the latter reported), »so that I can arrange the exchange service with them, explain the possibilities and convince them of our good intentions.«<sup>65</sup>

Laux lost no time, getting into the train with the Americans and managing to escape the watchful eye of George F. Kennan, who was now in charge of the American diplomats and journalists detained after 10 December 1941, and strike up a conversation with Lochner on the way.<sup>66</sup> Lochner and Laux knew one another from a press trip to Finland in 1940 that had been organised by the Foreign Office. Laux and Brandt probably also knew about the scenarios drawn up by Lochner himself at the outset of the war for AP to obtain photo and news material via neutral states in the event that the US entered the war.<sup>67</sup> Lochner thus appears to be the real mastermind and originator of the AP/Nazi arrangement that came into effect in spring 1942. Both the AP management in the person of Kent Cooper as well as official German bodies knew

62 Joseph Goebbels, diary entry of 20 September 1941, in: Nationalsozialismus, Holocaust, Widerstand und Exil 1933–1945, online database (De Gruyter). Originally published in: *Die Tagebücher von Joseph Goebbels [The Diaries of Joseph Goebbels]*, ed. by Elke Fröhlich on behalf of the Institut für Zeitgeschichte and with the support of the National Archives Service of Russia, *Teil II: Diktate 1941–1945 [Part II: Dictations, 1941–1945]*, vol. 1: *July – September 1941*, ed. by Elke Fröhlich, Munich 1996, pp. 455–460.

63 Much more research remains to be done on the intelligence hubs in World War II. Initial indications in Barry Rubin, *Istanbul Intrigues*, Istanbul 2002, and on Bern in the documentary novel by Peter Kamber, *Geheime Agentin*, Berlin 2010. The file containing more than 1,000 pages of annotations by the author is also of note: <<http://www.geheimeagentin.de/files/GA/Anmerkungen-Geheime-Agentin.pdf>>.

64 Charles B. Burdick, *An American Island in Hitler's Reich. The Bad Nauheim Internment*, Menlo Park 1987.

65 Brandt report (fn. 2), p. 13.

66 AP report (fn. 9), p. 93.

67 On Lochner's scenarios, see *ibid.*, pp. 40–41.



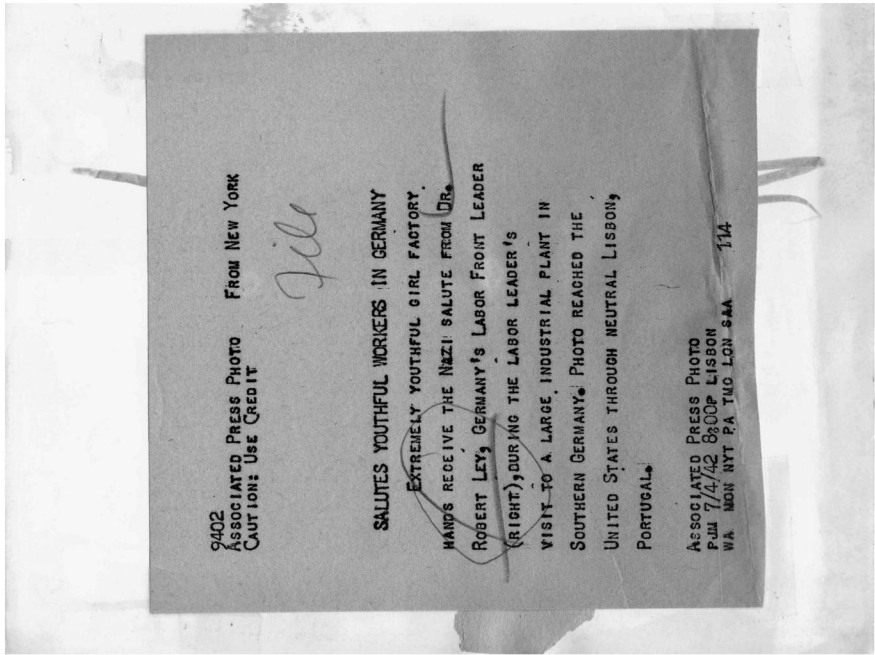
Dr. Robert Ley, leader of the Deutsche Arbeitsfront (German Labour Front, DAF), on an AP photo dated 4 July 1942. It was printed in the *New York Times* on 6 July 1942, p. 8 under the heading ›Germany calls on her youth to fill the gaps of labor‹ and credited to ›Associated Press‹.

(Author's private copy)

about these mutually advantageous plans.<sup>68</sup> Lochner may even have let Schmidt in on them, as after 10 December 1941 the latter worked towards achieving precisely the kind of arrangement that Lochner had envisaged.

Staff at the AP headquarters in New York were used to little deals with the Nazis. As early as October 1940, AP's executive photo editor Al Resch approved an agreement whereby AP received pictures ›free of charge‹ from the Foreign Office via its Wirephoto system, as Lochner, who had arranged this with Wilhelmstraße, proudly announced – an odd arrangement for an agency as proudly independent as AP was and is. For the gratis printing of the latest Nazi photos, AP made itself a willing tool of Nazi propaganda in two ways. Firstly, the agency directly disseminated handpicked Nazi photos in the American and international press. Secondly, AP even agreed to then supply the photos to *Facts in Review*, a newspaper financed by the German embassy in Washington and distributed to some 70,000 American readers by the Nazi foreign propaganda institution ›Library of Information‹. Another factor persuading the agency of the

68 Letter from Lochner to Cooper, 30 July 1941, and Memorandum (fn. 4). Both sources cited in AP report (fn. 9), pp. 95-96.



The description on the back of the picture notes: ›Photo reached the United States through neutral Lisbon, Portugal.‹ The *New York Times* also printed the photo with a note to this effect. (Author's private copy)

appeal of disseminating the Nazi pictures was the promise that the photos sold by AP to its customers were exclusive, and could be only reprinted and not sold on by *Facts in Review*.<sup>69</sup>

The CIC officers in charge mentioned a talk with Laux as a prisoner of war in November 1945: ›He claims to have made an agreement, with LOCHNER's consent[,] with the AP representative at LISBON to exchange newsreels and photos between Germany and the US.‹<sup>70</sup> The exchange mentioned here of film material as well, such as American and German newsreels, requires further investigation. Laux even tried his hand at personally acquiring films for Hitler while on his trips to Lisbon. In an interrogation in 1945, he said that he had wanted to purchase a Disney film about Hitler there, presumably ›Der Fuehrer's Face‹, an 8-minute short film with Donald Duck from 1943.<sup>71</sup>

69 Lochner to Resch, 2 October 1940. AP 02A.03, Subject Files, Box 48, Folder 402. APCA. Quoted in AP report (fn. 9), pp. 114-115.

70 Laux Interrogation 1945 (fn. 11).

71 Memorandum (fn. 4). Quoted in AP report (fn. 9), pp. 111-112. On Hollywood's connection with the Nazi regime, see Ben Urwand, *Der Pakt. Hollywoods Geschäfte mit Hitler*, Darmstadt 2017.



The main engineer of the wartime exchange with AP on the German side was Dr. Paul Karl Schmidt. From his position in the Foreign Office, he controlled an intricate international media web which has still not been completely reconstructed to this day, sometimes in agreement and sometimes starkly conflicting with Ministry of Propaganda projects.<sup>72</sup> Brandt writes that following a conversation with Schmidt, Laux said to him: »How was it possible that the Propaganda Ministry overlooked the importance of keeping up the connection with the AP via which valuable picture material could be imported and exported and published in enemy papers and periodicals? The Foreign Office has given me the task of attending to what the Propaganda Ministry neglected. For this reason I have already engaged Baatz, who with me shall supply such picture material as is wanted in foreign countries including enemy territory and which, seen from a German viewpoint, does not lack in propagandistic value. You know, considering existing circumstances it is definitely an advantage to the German cause if a German picture is published in the neutral press at all. With Baatz's and my picture material made according to the directions of the Foreign Office we want to put a stop to the monotony of the propaganda of the Propaganda Ministry. We'll offer these pictures to the AP first for which they will send us their own material on an exchange basis, just as you have been receiving it up to now. After talking over prospects with various editors of illustrated weeklies I am convinced that there will be no difficulty in placing such pictures in the German press much against the attitude of the Propaganda Ministry.«<sup>73</sup>

Brandt acknowledges in his report to Lochner that he had been convinced of the merits of Schmidt's/Laux's plans. By working for the Bureau Laux he had avoided service at the front and been able to protect the AP archive. Indirectly, he had even been able to continue working for AP, with photo material that was »of better quality than anything« the AP GmbH had been able to obtain for the head office in New York since the beginning of the war in 1939.

Only scattered details have so far come to light about Laux's mission in Lisbon on the occasion of the above-mentioned American-German prisoner exchange in the spring of 1942. But we do know that it was successful, because Luiz Lupi, the AP correspondent in Lisbon, then sent a telegram to Berlin communicating AP's consent to the regular photo exchange with the Bureau Laux. It now became Brandt's job each day until 1945 to compile German photo material for AP and to translate the captions of the photos supplied by AP into German and those of the German photos for AP into English. This was no easy task. As Laux told the American counter-intelligence officers in 1945/46, the captions of the AP photos that were published in the German press sometimes had to be changed as many as four times before the Ministry of Propaganda gave its approval. The final captions rarely even approximated the original

72 On the rivalry in general, see Willi Boelcke, *Kriegspropaganda 1939–1941. Die geheimen Ministerkonferenzen im Reichspropagandaministerium*, Stuttgart 1966; Longerich, *Propagandisten* (fn. 15), e.g. pp. 178, 246, 288–289, 335.

73 Brandt report (fn. 2), p. 13.

ones from AP.<sup>74</sup> The conclusion reached in the January 1946 report by the American counter-intelligence service regarding the use of AP photos in Nazi propaganda was accordingly damning: ›The changed text constitutes each news-photo a sample of Nazi propaganda, in that the German text cast an unfavorable light upon the United States or the Allies or was presented to the German public as a morale booster.‹<sup>75</sup>

Photos produced by Laux and Baatz themselves accounted for only part of the German photo material for AP, though they included some of great political significance (see Baatz's photo of Hitler and Mussolini below, ch. 4). Brandt had access to the complete official, i.e. also military, German photo production during these years. This presumably also included seized photo archives such as that of the *New York Times* in Paris, from which more than 25,000 photos worth at least 100,000 reichsmarks were ›borrowed‹ and incorporated into the photo archive of Transocean (TO), a globally operating Nazi wire service. The considerations of the Ministry of Propaganda reveal just how valuable a picture archive like this – comparable to that of the AP GmbH in Berlin – was for a future National Socialist Europe: ›The press unit of the propaganda division takes the view that founding a TO picture bureau at this time and introducing the TO pictures to the French press also represents a means of retaining customers after the war. If nothing else, the utilisation of the *New York Times* image archive will contribute significantly to the improvement of our European picture service.‹<sup>76</sup>

The Bureau Laux was similarly pleased in 1942, as it now had access not only to the AP GmbH photo archive but also to fresh photographic material delivered each day from Germany's enemy, the USA: ›With the arrival of AP material from Lisbon Laux's desires were appeased. ›It's your affair to supply the necessary exchange material for the AP.‹ I did so with the help of the picture department in the press department of the Foreign Office that received a print of every picture serviced by all agencies for their files. From this material I could choose all suitable pictures and have them reproduced for the AP services. I based my English captions on the original captions and had the pictures sent to Lupi in Lisbon via courier.‹ Brandt made himself indispensable to Laux with the AP photo exchange (›he needed me for the continuation of the AP connection‹), though he also reports that the two of them frequently clashed.<sup>77</sup>

The exchange in the other direction functioned equally smoothly. AP's Lisbon correspondent Luiz Lupi sent the AP photos arriving from New York to the German embassy in Lisbon, from where they were forwarded to Berlin via diplomatic pouch.

74 Memorandum for the Officer in Charge, Subject: Operation POUCH, File, 5 February 1946. NARA. RG 319, Records of the Army Staff, IRR, LAUX, Helmut, File X8502334, Box 456. Quoted in AP report (fn. 9), p. 98.

75 Operation Pouch Vol. II, File # D-10063, NARA, RG 319, Records of the Army Staff, Investigative records Repository (AP FOIA/Declassified 2017). Quoted in AP report (fn. 9), p. 99.

76 See Document 8.86 (Transocean-Europapress: memorandum on TO picture bureau in Paris, Berlin 27 May 1943, Coblenz Federal Archives [BAK], dossier R/288), in: Rolf Sachsse, *Die Erziehung zum Wegsehen. Fotografie im NS-Staat*, Dresden 2003, p. 359. A list compiled by the head of the relevant Ministry of Propaganda division Heiner Kurzbein also mentions a ›Soviet Russian archive‹ containing 180,000 photos; see Sachsse, *Erziehung zum Wegsehen*, p. 254.

77 Brandt report (fn. 2), pp. 14-15.

Besides New York, Lupi also sent a set of the Bureau Laux photos arriving from Berlin to London, the capital of Germany's wartime enemy, Great Britain. Here they were received by AP's photo editor for Europe, Joe Wurzel.<sup>78</sup>

AP acknowledged in its report by way of a tragic example just how valuable the photo exchange with the Bureau Laux was. There was a continuous and smooth supply of photos during the Warsaw Uprising of 1944, which was bloodily suppressed by the Nazis, though AP did not have any photojournalists of its own at the scene. American coverage ›depended heavily on the official output of the Nazi propaganda machine‹. Demand was the overriding consideration: ›It was a major story that proved the value of the link between Berlin and Stockholm over the Lisbon route.‹<sup>79</sup>

Such was the importance attached by all concerned to the AP GmbH photo archive that it was classified as material essential to the war effort after the major air strikes on Berlin in August 1943, and repeatedly transferred within the territories under Nazi control until the end of the war. (Brandt must have returned the archive to the AP headquarters in New York after 1945, possibly supplemented by material from the Bureau Laux.) As the Red Army approached, Laux had the archive taken to Aitrach near Memmingen. According to Brandt, Laux would always also transfer his personal spoils, paintings, furniture and a car to a safe place along with the ›secret archive.‹<sup>80</sup> Laux himself said in November 1945 that ›he safeguarded a valuable archive of photos and equipment belonging to the A.P.‹ and that he had handed this over to the Americans in Memmingen. He had, however, allegedly had difficulty contacting Lochner ›to make a detailed report on all A.P. matters in Germany.‹<sup>81</sup>

After the capitulation of the Germans in May 1945, Laux attempted, apparently without success, to directly pass himself off as an AP employee and accordingly to curry favour with AP. He was arrested in Memmingen on 7 January 1946 for having failed to disclose his membership of the Waffen SS.<sup>82</sup> A telling photograph from AP's in-house magazine *AP World* attests to the fact that the AP GmbH's picture archive with more than one million photos of all of the most important events in Germany since the 1920s had survived the war largely intact (see illustration on the right). This photo montage from 1945/46 is presented as a ›reunion‹ of the German ›AP family‹. The picture at the top shows Louis Lochner and the later AP president Wes Gallagher. Arthur von Brietzke is back running AP's photo lab in Germany on the centre right. On the bottom left, the rescued AP GmbH photo archive is being unpacked; on the bottom right are Willy Brandt and Lynn Heinzerling, father of Larry Heinzerling, the principal author of the AP report published on 10 May 2017.

78 Memorandum (fn. 74). Quoted in AP report (fn. 9), p. 98.

79 This should correctly read: ›the link between Berlin and New York over the Stockholm and Lisbon routes‹. AP report (fn. 9), p. 121.

80 Brandt report (fn. 2), pp. 15-16.

81 Laux Interrogation 1945 (fn. 11).

82 AP report (fn. 9), p. 97.





AP staff photographer B. I. Sanders took this picture at the Nuremberg war crimes trial. Using headphones tuned to four different languages are, left to right: Noland Norgaard, Louis Lochner, Chief of Bureau Wes Gallagher, and Dan De Luce.



AP photographer Jim Pringle gives a few tips to a Russian in Berlin on the use of a camera.

## WITH AP IN Germany



Photo printer Arthur Brietzke gets the AP Berlin darkroom back in shape again.



Staffer Dick Kasischke with Lisa Remus and Erne Loeffler of the Berlin office staff look over pictures returned from safe keeping in southern Germany.



Lynn Heinzerling gives a hand with the unloading of office supplies in Berlin.



Left to right, Godfrey Anderson, Willie Brandt and Lynn Heinzerling discuss problems of reequipping the Berlin bureau in new quarters.



Thanks to Brandt, the historically significant distribution list for the AP photos within the Nazi leadership has survived: ›The pictures for the [Laux] office were for the exchange service with the AP, consisting of three sets for Lisbon – the additional three sets for Stockholm weren't required as yet. Besides this the reproduction and printing of all the AP material we received which was sent to:

1. The Foreign Minister
2. Ambassador Hewel in the staff of the Führer
3. SS-Headquarters c/o Obergruppenführer Jüttner
4. Reichsführer SS Himmler c/o his aide de camp Dr. Brandt
5. Air Force headquarters
6. SS Standartenführer Keilhaus – acting liaison officer between SS headquarters and the Foreign Office
7. Ministerialrat Fischer in the Propaganda Ministry
8. Several sets (four at the most) for the leaders of the Press and Information Units stationed with army staffs

The material was, Brandt said, ›purely for the personal information‹ of the recipients or their ›press and information representatives‹.<sup>83</sup> The list is revealing, because the daily distribution of the secret AP photo material reflects who was considered to constitute the Nazi leadership's inner core: Hitler, Göring, Himmler, Goebbels, Ribbentrop and some unnamed leading Wehrmacht commanders.

As early as 1935, a daily picture viewing was arranged for Hitler with general press pictures and photographs of his person. Besides ›military innovations‹, ›pictures from the field of architecture‹ and ›the latest pictures of particular significance‹, Hitler was especially interested in pictures ›from abroad‹.<sup>84</sup> As well as being a staple of the pictures submitted to Hitler for his daily viewing, the AP photos were presumably also particularly attractive, affording as they did an immediate insight into the latest activities of Roosevelt and Churchill and the political, social, cultural and military life of the US and Great Britain during the war.

But the AP photos did more than simply satisfy the curiosity of the Nazi leadership. They were used, probably in the thousands, until 1945 for anti-American and anti-Semitic propaganda in the Nazi press. It is clear that Brandt was trying to forestall any protest by Lochner to this effect in his report. He stated that all of the AP photos had, after all, passed the Allied censorship. Like all AP photos from and to Europe, the pictures did indeed go through the American and British military censorship.<sup>85</sup> In rare instances the censors also withheld Nazi photos intended for AP New York, releasing them only after the end of the war.<sup>86</sup>

83 Brandt report (fn. 2), pp. 18-19.

84 Sachsse, *Erziehung zum Wegsehen* (fn. 76), pp. 37, 223, 254, 313.

85 The fact that the pictures passed military censorship is still the main argument put forward by AP today to allay moral concerns about the photo exchange with Nazi Germany: AP report (fn. 9), pp. 3, 6-7. On the involvement of the British military censorship, see *ibid.*, p. 105.

86 *Ibid.*, p. 118.

AP photos selected for publication were mostly printed in the upscale Foreign Office magazine *Berlin – Rom – Tokio*<sup>87</sup> or the *Berliner Illustrierte*. The overambitious, Stockholm-based magazine project *TELE*,<sup>88</sup> the brainchild of Schmidt, was also meant to receive photos from AP via Bureau Laux, even though the agreement with AP stated that they could only be published in the German Reich.<sup>89</sup> Hitler and Ribbentrop appear to have received a test edition of *TELE* in the autumn of 1944. But the project was doomed from the outset, as it was detected by the Allies. Brandt also claimed to have divulged it to Shanke during his second visit to Stockholm in 1944.<sup>90</sup>

The AP photos remained so important throughout the entire duration of the war that Schmidt got into serious trouble with the powerful recipients on the distribution list when the pictures began arriving later and later from Lisbon, sometimes having already been printed in Allied magazines. In order to accelerate distribution, preparations began in 1944 for the photo exchange to take place via Stockholm as well as Lisbon. Laux also wanted to finally obtain a formal contract with AP, so Brandt was to meet the Stockholm AP representative Shanke personally.<sup>91</sup> To disguise the Swedish deal, the photos were to be exchanged via the Stockholm agency ›Pressens Bild‹.<sup>92</sup>

Shanke was already tasked with gathering clandestine information in Stockholm. He was even permitted to take out a paid subscription to a certain ›Scandinavia Telegraph Bureau‹ that was clearly financed by German propaganda, as, in the words of the New York AP headquarters, ›a matter of insurance and one more peephole into Germany with a caution to Shanke to always identify any material used as of enemy origin‹.<sup>93</sup> Shanke also gleaned news from POW exchanges between the Germans and

87 The magazine contains numerous photos of Hitler and the Nazi leadership credited to ›Bureau Laux‹. This proves that Heinrich Hoffmann and his photo agency did not have an absolute monopoly on pictures of Hitler, as is often claimed, including in the AP report (fn. 9), p. 83. It remains to be investigated whether the upscale magazine *The XXth Century*, financed by the Foreign Office and published by Klaus Mehnert in Shanghai, was also provided with AP photos. No authorship details are given for the printed photos. On Mehnert and *The XXth Century*, see Otto Köhler, *Wir Schreibmaschinentäter. Journalisten unter Hitler – und danach*, Cologne 1989, pp. 190–232. A review of the journal *Signal* did not detect any AP photographs. Given its concentration on the Wehrmacht and a ›new Europe‹ under Nazi leadership, this is not surprising. Which of the photos used in *Signal* made their way into the American press via the AP exchange has yet to be investigated.

88 Ziegler, *Die Phantom-Zeitschrift TELE* (fn. 21). The doctoral thesis was written under the supervision of Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann in Mainz, who had been on the staff of the *TELE* project herself.

89 ›Laux went to Lisbon and besides a huge amount of food stuffs etc. for himself and Dr. Schmidt brought back a statement signed by Lupi acknowledging the agreement for an exchange service between Laux and the AP‹ Brandt report (fn. 2), p. 14.

90 *Ibid.*, p. 26.

91 *Ibid.*, p. 22. Edwin (Eddie) A. Shanke (b. in Milwaukee on 28 April 1910) was likewise detained in Berlin on 10 December 1941 and, following his detention in Bad Nauheim with Lochner, returned to the USA as part of the exchange in spring 1942. He died in Stockholm on 1 December 2004. See also fn. 3.

92 Brandt report (fn. 2), pp. 21–22. Regarding Pressens Bild, the AP report (fn. 9) says on p. 118: ›No contracts, correspondence or other records regarding wartime arrangements with Pressens Bild could be found in AP Corporate Archive other than the many photos from Germany in the AP Photo Library the Swedish agency is credited with relaying to AP in New York‹.

93 AP Photo Library. E911, WWII: Europe, France, Destruction, Paris – Miscellaneous. Quoted in AP report (fn. 9), p. 119.

the Allies, ›loads of stories which still can't be told‹, as he wrote in a letter to his parents in 1943.<sup>94</sup> ›The newspaper colony here gradually is dwindling as Stockholm's value as news center deteriorates. We still get an occasional good story out of here but nothing like it used to be‹, he wrote home in 1944. Shanke had meanwhile married in Stockholm, and the reanimated deal with the Bureau Laux gave him the opportunity to continue using his position there as a key European lookout for AP.<sup>95</sup>

The economic importance of the photo exchange with the Bureau Laux for AP should not be underestimated. AP general manager Cooper proudly recalled in his memoirs that as early as 1931, the subsidiaries in Great Britain and Germany had already shaken off the restrictions of the cartel agreement with Reuters, Havas and WTB and sold photos extremely profitably throughout the world. ›The Associated Press world picture service was so successful by 1938 that its excess of receipts over expenses helped finance The Associated Press entry into world dissemination of news in words.‹<sup>96</sup>

Cooper employed 100 staff as war correspondents in World War II, with a new approach to reporting in mind: ›[...] the idea in spreading the news coverage to the trenches was to bring the war in words and pictures to the homes of America through personal interviews and news stories with photos if possible.‹<sup>97</sup> The fact that the highly sought-after photos of the enemy Nazi ruling elite were delivered free of charge must have enabled AP to turn a considerable profit. Just how important photos of the fascist leaders, in particular, were to AP is evidenced by Cooper's attempt in September 1941 to persuade Hitler and Mussolini to have their pictures taken by AP men as well as their personal photographers.<sup>98</sup> And this dream of Cooper's was in fact fulfilled just a few months later. Not only Heinrich Hoffmann, but also the Bureau Laux as AP's secret partner was permitted to photograph the ›Führer‹, presenting him to the American and international public in the proper light even as the war was still unfolding. Numerous pictures of Hitler by Laux and Baatz were published in *Berlin – Rom – Tokio* and elsewhere, and printed in hundreds of American papers via the AP exchange.

One striking example shows how AP photos were exploited in the Nazi press. Laux had signed a contract with Deutscher Verlag in 1942 granting the *Berliner Illustrierte* the rights to print AP picture material first.<sup>99</sup> But as things started going downhill for Nazi Germany, allegedly almost no photos could be published ›without faking‹.<sup>100</sup> Brandt mentions a typical example in his report: Schmidt had the photograph of a flag-raising

94 Eddie Shanke to ›Momberdad‹, Stockholm, 11 November 1943, in: Eddie Shanke Papers, B-5.4, Series 2-EAS, Box 1, Folder 4 (letters from Stockholm), Marquette University Archives.

95 Eddie Shanke to ›Momberdad‹, Stockholm, 10 December 1944, in: *ibid.*

96 Kent Cooper, *Kent Cooper and The Associated Press. An Autobiography. The Inside Story of a Great News Agency*, New York 1959, p. 140.

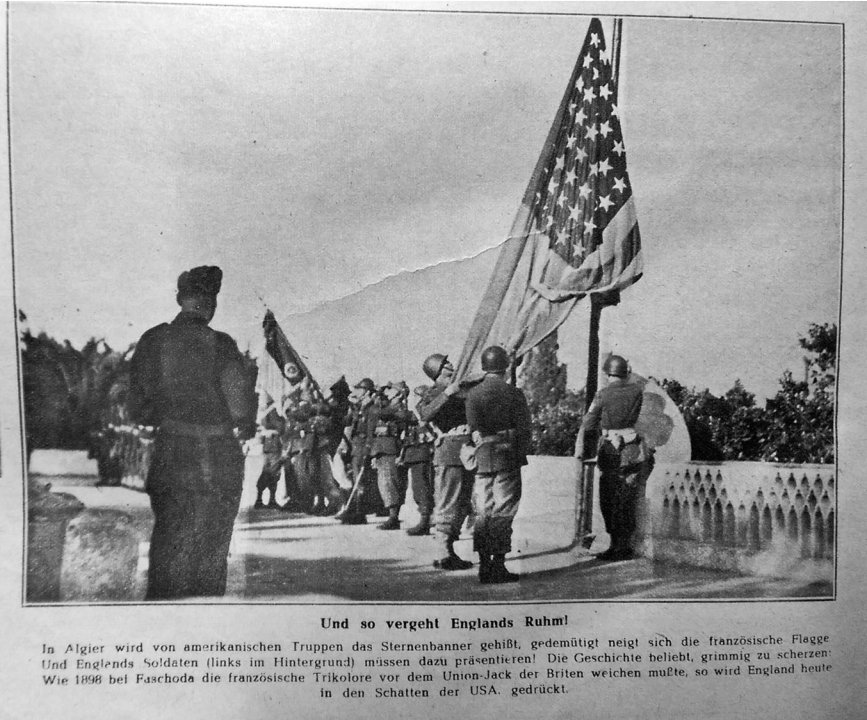
97 *Ibid.*, pp. 238, 244.

98 Cooper to Stratton/Miller, 2 September 1941. Printed in AP documents (fn. 2), pp. 56-57.

99 Brandt report (fn. 2), p. 20.

100 Brandt is greatly exaggerating here. Until the spring of 1945, the *Berliner Illustrierte* was full of photos that probably originated from the AP photo exchange and were not retouched.





The retouched AP photo for the German press mentioned in the 1946 Brandt report. It shows an Allied flag-raising ceremony after the landing in Algiers/North Africa in November 1942. The British flag was removed by order of Dr. Paul Karl Schmidt to create the impression that the Allied troops were only fighting for the establishment of the American empire and England was being >forced into the shadow of the USA< (caption).

(from: *Berliner Illustrierte*, 24 December 1942)

ceremony in Algiers after the Allied landing in North Africa falsified; the Union Jack was airbrushed out of it. It has been possible to identify the altered AP photo in the *Berliner Illustrierte* of 24 December 1942. In conjunction with the spiteful caption, it was implied that the English and French had to submit themselves and their colonial territories to the establishment of the American empire.<sup>101</sup> It is interesting to note that the *Berliner Illustrierte* was full of picture material that must have originated mainly from the photo exchange with AP, as it was printed throughout without any indication of the source. And yet strict regulations had been in place since 1935 according to

<sup>101</sup> Brandt report (fn. 2), p. 20. The original is available in the apimages database under ID number 4212002095. There are other versions with the ID numbers 4211250271 and 421206162. The date of the flag hoisting varies between 25 November and 6 December 1942.



which neither the name of the photographer (if known) nor the name of the picture agency could be omitted, and even abbreviations were to be avoided (Associated Press rather than AP, etc.).<sup>102</sup>

The American security officers became aware of the core activities of the Bureau Laux through Brandt's testimonies in Berlin in 1945/46, and in southern Germany through the interrogations of Laux. They sum the situation up nicely in one of the records from Brandt's denazification attempt: ›During the final years of the war Laux had an exchange arrangement with the photo bureau of the Associated Press for the regular exchange of pictures. This exchange took place at Lisbon or Stockholm from where the picture production of Associated Press was forwarded to Berlin by plane. Interesting photos were shown each day to the chief of the press division [Schmidt] who selected some of them to be shown to Hitler and Ribbentrop. Moreover, the Laux agency offered this material to the German illustrated papers, in the first instance to the Deutscher Verlag for reprinting. The agency also furnished first editions of pictures for the review Berlin – Rome – Tokio, the biggest Axis magazine.‹<sup>103</sup>

From today's perspective, the daily photo exchange between AP and the Bureau Laux, functioning smoothly and remaining under wraps even at the height of the Second World War, is remarkable. Other endeavours by the National Socialists to influence the international press and public opinion were swiftly thwarted and immediately created a great hue and cry in the contemporary media. One case in point was the failed attempt by Goebbels' Ministry of Propaganda to found ›Radio Mundial‹, a project for which costly activities had been developed in all of the key neutral countries that served as news hubs (Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland and Turkey).<sup>104</sup> But the daily photo exchange between AP and the Bureau Laux was not even publicly discussed by Associated Press's American competitors, even though it put them at a competitive disadvantage. It is probable that a pooling arrangement was established to balance the various interests.<sup>105</sup>

A pool of official photos from the theatres of war had already been arranged by the War Department shortly before the US entered the war at the end of 1941, ›with AP, ACME, the International Photo Service and Life magazine as its first participants‹. In late 1942, at least 30 war photographers were working for this pool of all the participating picture companies.<sup>106</sup> But pool photos were not exclusive photos, and these were

102 Several yearly volumes of the *Berliner Illustrierte*, *Wiener Illustrierte* and *Illustrierter Beobachter* were checked by the author. A systematic research survey of AP photos in the Nazi Press and Nazi photos in the Allied Press will be published in the coming years. On the press regulations, see document 4.49 (Weiß, head of the Reich Association of the German Press [*Reichsverband der Deutschen Presse*, RDP]: copyright note under pictures and illustrations, in: Deutsche Presse, Berlin 25/1935, issue 6, p. 69), in: Sachsse, *Erziehung zum Wegsehen* (fn. 76), p. 288.

103 Vetting 1 (fn. 39).

104 Willi Boelcke, *Die Macht des Radios. Weltpolitik und Auslandsrundfunk 1924–1976*, Frankfurt a.M. 1977, pp. 485–506.

105 Photos from the agency ACME were also marked ›from neutral Lisbon‹ during the Second World War.

106 Stratton to Walters, 27 May 1940, AP02A.03, Subject Files, Box 54, Folder: Newsphoto/Wirephoto, APCA. Quoted in AP report (fn. 9), p. 86. This important letter about the pooling arrangement is also reproduced in AP documents (fn. 98), pp. 53–54.

what the AP leadership was particularly interested in. For the year 1942, Cooper proudly reported to the AP board of directors: ›In addition to the heavy volume of newsphoto copy from pool and official sources on Allied operations, AP newsphoto service also provided – exclusively for the most part – many pictures from Axis-occupied areas, obtained through neutral sources. Notable beats were scored on first pictures of the German occupation of Vichy France and first pictures from the German side of the Stalingrad front.‹<sup>107</sup> And for the year 1943, Cooper told the AP board of directors of ›noteworthy firsts on distribution of pictures obtained from enemy territory via neutral capitals – including such copy as the first pictures of Berlin bomb damage.‹<sup>108</sup> This shows just how important the secret photo exchange with the Bureau Laux was for AP.

For AP's company history, the deal with the Nazi regime has a tragic dimension. On the orders of Ernst Kaltenbrunner, the AP correspondent Joseph (Joe) Morton was shot dead at the Mauthausen concentration camp on 24 January 1945. Morton was probably the only foreign journalist executed by the Nazis. He had been captured in Slovakia with an American commando operation to which Hitler's Commando Order of 18 October 1942 was applied.<sup>109</sup> The photo exchange between AP and the Bureau Laux continued for months even after Morton's execution.<sup>110</sup>

### 3. Foreign Journalists in the ›Third Reich‹: An Uncharted Research Field

Why did the daily exchange of photographs between Associated Press and the Nazi regime from 1942 to 1945 remain under wraps for almost 75 years? The answer is closely related to the foreign correspondents, largely neglected by historical scholarship, who reported from the ›Third Reich‹ and effectively represented the ›global public‹ at the time.<sup>111</sup> Even recent studies tend to assume that most foreign journalists left

107 Report of the General Manager, 31 December 1942. Associated Press Annual Report for the fiscal year 1942, 80. AP01.01 Records of the AP Board of Directors. APCA. Quoted in AP report (fn. 9), p. 114.

108 Report of the General Manager, 31 December 1943. Associated Press Annual Report for the fiscal year 1943, 80. AP01.01 Records of the AP Board of Directors. APCA. Quoted in AP report (fn. 9), p. 116.

109 This order stipulated that all enemy soldiers found outside the immediate combat area were suspected of carrying out terror and sabotage attacks and were to be shot dead on the spot or, in special cases, turned over to the security service (Sicherheitsdienst, SD). Cf. Manfred Messerschmidt, *Was damals Recht war. NS-Militär- und Strafrecht im Vernichtungskrieg*, Essen 1996, pp. 177–180.

110 The execution and the details surrounding it were only clarified in July 1945 by the AP correspondent Lynn Heinzerling. Cf. Associated Press (ed.), *Breaking News. How The Associated Press Has Covered War, Peace, and Everything Else*, Princeton 2007, pp. 233–234; Cooper, *Cooper and AP* (fn. 96), p. 241; Ray Moseley, *Reporting War. How Foreign Correspondents Risked Capture, Torture and Death to Cover World War II*, New Haven 2017, p. 275.

111 Initial conceptual thoughts in: *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 62 (2014) issue 5: Auslandskorrespondenten: Journalismus und Politik 1900–1970, ed. by Norman Domeier and Jörn Happel. My post-doctoral thesis on this subject at the University of Stuttgart is scheduled for completion in 2018:

Germany after 1933 and that AP was active »as the only foreign news agency in Berlin« until the United States entered the war in December 1941.<sup>112</sup> But in fact the reverse was true. Most of the media companies, in particular the American ones, bolstered their bureaus in Germany after 1933 and significantly increased their staff. Nazi Germany with its capital Berlin was the most interesting news centre in the world during these years.<sup>113</sup> The competition among the American newspapermen was so great to the last that most of them did not make it to safety in time and were interned on 10 December 1941. The AP men Lochner and Shanke were among them. »Each one wanted to be the last deportee who would turn out the light.«<sup>114</sup>

The role of the foreign correspondents as key interpreters of events, suppliers of information and actors in the political arena is a research gap, particularly compared to how much is now known about Nazi propaganda.<sup>115</sup> This explains the fact that the crucial source on the closely guarded secret of the photo exchange between AP and the Nazi regime was languishing among the posthumous papers of a foreign journalist. Although Louis P. Lochner was one of the most important foreign correspondents in the Weimar Republic and the National Socialist state, no biography has been written about him. And he is no exception among the foreign journalists in Germany in this regard. Few researchers found their way to the extensive posthumous papers of Lochner at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin in Madison. Of those who did order the file with Brandt's name, most would have returned it disappointed, having quickly seen on the first pages that this person who corresponded with Lochner was not the later German Chancellor, but some other, obscurer Willy Brandt.

Unlike their German colleagues, the foreign correspondents accredited in Berlin were not *Schriftleiter* (an obsolescent term for »editors« used in particular under National Socialism) demoted to receiving orders from the centrally controlled propaganda machine. They remained independent journalists and political actors, even enjoying

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Norman Domeier, *Weltöffentlichkeit und Diktatur. Die ausländischen Journalisten und das »Dritte Reich« 1932–1946*.

112 Annette Vowinckel, *Agenten der Bilder. Fotografisches Handeln im 20. Jahrhundert*, Göttingen 2016, p. 39.

113 In 1940, there were some two dozen accredited American foreign correspondents in Berlin. BAL, R 901/60448 (American reporters in Germany). Cf. also the numerous membership lists in the rediscovered archive of the Association of the Foreign Press in Germany (Verein der Ausländischen Presse in Deutschland, VAP). The number of foreign journalists working in Nazi Germany was much larger still, as not all of them were members of the VAP. The original files have been returned to VAP in Berlin (<<http://www.vap-deutschland.org>>). Copies and inventory (as of January 1975) are also still available in the Swedish National Archives at Marieberg, Stockholm: Verein der Ausländischen Presse zu Berlin (VAP), Riksarkivet Marieberg (RAM), SE/RA/770176. On the rediscovery of the VAP archive, which was thought to have been lost, see Sonja Hillerich, *Der Verein der Ausländischen Presse zu Berlin: »Ritter der Feder« oder »nichtamtliche Diplomaten«?*, in: *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 62 (2014), pp. 398–410.

114 Burdick, *An American Island* (fn. 64), p. 3.

115 Cf. Norman Domeier, *Staatsgeheimnis und Auslandspressen im »Dritten Reich«*. Spielraum für Aus-handlungen zwischen Regime und ausländischen Journalisten, in: Daniel Münzner/Robert Radu (eds), *Kampf um Wissen. Spionage, Geheimhaltung und Öffentlichkeit zwischen Nationalstaat und Globalisierung (1870–1940)*, Paderborn 2015, pp. 159–175.

something akin to diplomatic status. Goebbels' Ministry of Propaganda and Ribbentrop's Foreign Office had of course developed a sophisticated carrot-and-stick system, albeit a polycratic system as was typical of the National Socialist state. This was intensified after the outbreak of war in September 1939. Nevertheless, the worst that foreign correspondents had to fear was being expelled from the German Empire, and perhaps a bit of a dip in their career back home.<sup>116</sup> To what extent the strategy of staying in Nazi Germany for as long as possible affected Lochner's coverage and that of the other AP correspondents remains to be explored.<sup>117</sup> At any rate, Lochner, who also served as chairman of the Association of the Foreign Press in Germany (VAP) for many years, received one of the 1939 Pulitzer Prizes for his reports from Nazi Germany.

What we do already know is that AP pursued a policy towards the Nazi regime that was much more defensive than that of other media companies. This had been agreed on by Lochner as the »man on the spot« and AP manager Cooper shortly after the National Socialist takeover. »I abhor censorships, and feel terrible that we cannot publish everything we know«, Lochner wrote to Cooper in March 1933, but he did not want to »risk having our whole organization destroyed« and was instead »trying just as long as possible to remain within that country«. They would not spread any lies, Lochner wrote, but nor would they publish any news that would endanger AP's existence in Germany.<sup>118</sup>

#### 4. Conclusion: »Trading with the Enemy«

The source material discovered in Louis P. Lochner's posthumous papers and presented in this article proves the existence of a clandestine, daily cooperation between Associated Press and the Bureau Laux, an unofficial agency run by the SS and the German Foreign Office, during the war years 1942–1945. The famous photo of Hitler and Mussolini shortly after the failed assassination attempt of 20 July 1944 documents the political impact of the arrangement between AP and the Nazi regime. Just a few days later, on 23 July, American newspaper readers were able to see for

116 Brief detentions, followed by exchanges, of diplomats and journalists took place after the state in question entered the war. The American journalists in Berlin were placed under house arrest on 10 December 1941, one day before Germany declared war on the USA. They were then detained in a hotel in Bad Nauheim before being exchanged via Lisbon at the end of May 1942 for the German journalists and diplomats from Washington. The Americans, with Lochner and Shanke among their number, reached New York on 1 June 1942 on the Swedish ship *Drottningholm*. Cf. Burdick, *An American Island* (fn. 64).

117 There has so far been only one short article, with a Marxist bias: Heidi Mühlenberg, Die Berichterstattung der AP und UP aus dem faschistischen Deutschland bis 1941, in: *Theorie und Praxis des sozialistischen Journalismus* 14 (1986), pp. 400–411.

118 Lochner to Cooper, 26 March 1933, in: Louis Paul Lochner Papers, The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Box 1, Folder 23.





›Protected by Providence. The Führer greets the Duce after the failed criminal attack. Headquarters, 20 July 1944.  
Photo: Gerd Baatz (Laux).‹  
(from: *Berlin – Rom – Tokio*, July 1944, p. 1)

themselves that the ›Führer‹ was fine. Any potential allied support for the coup by Stauffenberg and his co-conspirators was blunted by the rapid photo coverage made possible by the well-oiled AP/Bureau Laux connection.<sup>119</sup>

The fact that the US administration secretly approved the daily photo exchange with the enemy while its own soldiers were dying on the battlefields and the Holocaust was taking place makes the deal questionable in many respects, not only for historians. The deal between AP and the Nazi regime already seemed suspect to the contemporaries tasked with researching it in 1945/46. The intensity with which the CIC ran the above-mentioned ›Operation Pouch‹ is clear from its report to Washington on 14 January 1946 – just one week after Helmut Laux's arrest in Memmingen on 7 January 1946. Written by special agents Paul Hoylen and Robert E. Gregg, the report does not pull any punches. It recommended that criminal proceedings be initiated against Louis P. Lochner, whose loyalty to the USA was generally under suspicion since he had been identified as the author of the whole deal. ›Lochner was apparently fully aware that Laux possessed the Waffen SS rank of Sonderführer when he negotiated for Laux's Bureau to receive and transmit news-photos from the United States to Germany during the war. Under the protective cloak of the Waffen SS, the Associated Press continued to function through a camouflaged process, this whole plan having been planned and acquiesced to by Lochner.‹ The fact that Lochner had exchanged private

<sup>119</sup> It was not previously known that the picture of Hitler and Mussolini, which was also promptly circulated in the German press to restore calm, came from the Bureau Laux.

NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE, SUNDAY, JULY 22, 1944

# Nazi Prisoners Sure Germany Has Lost War

One Captured in Normandy  
Asserts Army Grails Is  
Beginning of the End

By Ned Rorem

Germany, like the war, has been lost. WITH THIS assertion by a PRISONER of the Nazis (and the German troops facing the British Army in France, but so far there is no indication of a general collapse of fighting), the war is over.

"The Germans feel in the back, prisoners are few and most of them have been captured and taken out of the front," he said. "The war has been captured and taken out of the front," he said. "The war has been captured and taken out of the front," he said.

"There has been no significant increase in the number of German troops in the front," he said. "The war has been captured and taken out of the front," he said.

"The British have been very successful in the front," he said. "The war has been captured and taken out of the front," he said.

"The British have been very successful in the front," he said. "The war has been captured and taken out of the front," he said.

"The British have been very successful in the front," he said. "The war has been captured and taken out of the front," he said.

**Quiet Beginning of End**  
The prisoner, who is a German, said that he and his comrades were sure that the war was over. He said that the Germans were sure that the war was over. He said that the Germans were sure that the war was over.

**After General Surrender**  
The prisoner said that he had seen General von Rundstedt. He said that General von Rundstedt had said that the war was over. He said that General von Rundstedt had said that the war was over.

**German Vets Hiding**  
The prisoner said that he had seen many German soldiers who were hiding. He said that these soldiers were sure that the war was over. He said that these soldiers were sure that the war was over.

**Big Assault Day Reported**  
The prisoner said that he had heard that there would be a big assault day. He said that this assault day would be the beginning of the end. He said that this assault day would be the beginning of the end.

# Hitler Greeted Mussolini After Reported Plot to Kill Nazi Leaders

The Russian, right, extends his left hand to the former Axis partner for a handshake after the reported assassination attempt on Hitler in Berlin.

The German captain, center, who is a prisoner of the British, is seen in the background.

The German captain, center, who is a prisoner of the British, is seen in the background.

The German captain, center, who is a prisoner of the British, is seen in the background.

The German captain, center, who is a prisoner of the British, is seen in the background.

The German captain, center, who is a prisoner of the British, is seen in the background.

# Badoglio Links German Revolt To Defeat Victories

Believes Role of People in  
Plot Is Slight, Asserts  
End May Come Quickly

By Ned Rorem

ROBERT, July 22 (AP)—Badoglio, king of Italy, said today that the role of the people in the German revolt was slight. He said that the end of the war was near. He said that the end of the war was near.

"The role of the people is slight," he said. "The end of the war is near," he said. "The end of the war is near," he said.

"The role of the people is slight," he said. "The end of the war is near," he said. "The end of the war is near," he said.

"The role of the people is slight," he said. "The end of the war is near," he said. "The end of the war is near," he said.

"The role of the people is slight," he said. "The end of the war is near," he said. "The end of the war is near," he said.

**Germany Is at the mercy**  
of the Allies, he said. He said that the Allies were sure that the war was over. He said that the Allies were sure that the war was over.

**Italy's role is slight**  
He said that Italy's role in the war was slight. He said that Italy's role in the war was slight.

**End of war is near**  
He said that the end of the war was near. He said that the end of the war was near.

**German revolt is slight**  
He said that the German revolt was slight. He said that the German revolt was slight.

# MILGRIM

**Our TORSO DRESS now in SATIN.**  
The dress is made of satin. It is a very nice dress. It is a very nice dress. It is a very nice dress.

**For the lady who is**  
The dress is for the lady who is. It is a very nice dress. It is a very nice dress. It is a very nice dress.

**doing. Available in sizes from 10 to 14.**  
The dress is available in sizes from 10 to 14. It is a very nice dress. It is a very nice dress. It is a very nice dress.

The Laux photo, published in the *New York Herald Tribune* of 23 July 1944, p. 3, with the source given as ›Associated Press radiophoto‹. Caption here: ›Der Fuehrer, right, extends his left hand as the former Duce arrives for a conference after the reported assassination attempt, according to the German caption accompanying this photo. The picture was radioed from Stockholm to London and then to New York.‹

correspondence with the enemy, sending and receiving letters and photos to and from his mother-in-law in Berlin from 1942 to 1945 via the AP/Bureau Laux channel, was a further charge against him.<sup>120</sup>

The American counter-intelligence service was equally specific and unsparing in its accusations against AP as a media company: »From this preliminary investigation it is the opinion of these agents that the definite proof is likely to be found upon which to substantiate a charge that the Associated Press, over a period ranging from 1943 to 1945, engaged in operations coming within the purview of the Trading with the Enemy Act. Through negotiations originally begun by Louis P. Lochner with Laux in May 1942 and concluded with a written contract executed by Associated Press Agent L.C. Lupi and Laux later in the same year, it was arranged that quantities of Associated Press news-photos were to be transmitted from Lisbon to Berlin through Diplomatic Courier Pouches of the German Foreign Office to the Press Section of this branch of the German government. It is further believed that evidence will be developed to prove that the German Propaganda Ministry had access to these news-photos from the United States, all reaching the enemy government through the Associated Press, and that texts accompanying these news-photos were altered in a manner favorable to the Germans, before their eventual release to the German press; that Associated Press news-photos were illegally placed at the disposal of the German authorities, during the war, for at least information value; that direct use of Associated Press news-photos as German propaganda possibly occurred during the war, through this highly questionable agreement.«<sup>121</sup>

120 According to Laux, it was Brandt who incorporated these letters and photos into the exchange. Memorandum (fn. 74). Quoted in AP report (fn. 9), p. 152.

121 Memorandum (fn. 4). Quoted in AP report (fn. 9), pp. 127-128.

The CIC agents in occupied Germany were not, however, aware that the White House had secretly approved the ›highly questionable agreement‹ of July 1942. The extensive ›Operation Pouch‹ investigation files were quickly closed in Washington in 1946; they were not declassified and made available for research until 2017. The chief US censor and former AP executive editor Byron Price, appointed to the public office shortly after Pearl Harbor, had approved the deal with the Nazi regime.<sup>122</sup> Was the political decision taken by President Roosevelt personally, did he and his staff use the photo exchange much as the Nazi leadership did? Did Churchill's administration in London also receive copies of the German photos – after all, the British military censorship was involved in the deal? Did there exist, as on the German side, secret units in Washington and London that evaluated the photographs from Germany, and prepared their own pictures for the enemy? Was the cooperation with Nazi Germany actively swept under the carpet after 1945, is this why AP employed the Bureau Laux/Waffen SS men again? Did the exchange only involve photographs, or were other documents also traded? Were negotiations perhaps even conducted via this route between the wartime enemies USA/Great Britain and the German Empire – negotiations which would have been compromising after the complete victory over the Nazis and an increasing awareness of the Holocaust among Western publics? This reconstruction of the cooperation between AP and Nazi Germany during World War II can be only the beginning of a more in-depth exploration of these dangerous liaisons in the media world.

Even during the war, the American approach to dealing with National Socialism was complex.<sup>123</sup> The answers to the questions posed here will probably further complicate the assessment of US positions vis-à-vis the ›Third Reich‹. But these contentious questions can only be discussed more specifically if Associated Press and the relevant government agencies in the US open their archives in their entirety for historical research. Only then will we learn more about this communication channel between the USA and Germany in the Second World War.

(Translated from the German by Joy Titheridge)

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122 Howard office memorandum, 13 July 1942, NARA, RG 216, Office of Censorship, Index to Administrative Subject File ›Howard, N.R.‹, April 1943/June 1942, Box 1140. Quoted in AP report (fn. 9), p. 100.

123 Cf. Michaela Hoenicke Moore, *Know Your Enemy. The American Debate on Nazism 1933–1945*, Cambridge 2010; Laurel Leff, *Buried by the Times. The Holocaust and America's Most Important Newspaper*, Cambridge 2005.